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Psychology of Happiness for Individual Thriving

Statement of Problem: Women are balancing many roles in their life which can lead to high levels of stress and burnout. Many of these women will not seek mental health support in the form of traditional mental health care. There is a need to explore an effective empowering intervention for this population.

Methodology & Theoretical Orientation: Exploratory research was conducted to observe how resilience and wellbeing can be cultivated through the application of positive psychology interventions. The structure included an interactive learning environment of a small group of six women that meet once a week for eight weeks, with each session lasting 1.15 hours. There were two facilitators guiding the learning and self-exploration process. The facilitators provided the theoretical foundation needed for learners to understand, appreciate and apply three core principals from the field of Positive Psychology; positive emotions, mindfulness and character strengths. With applied models of practice and experiential activities, the group was guided through a process the used narrative practices to explore the impact of the positive psychology intervention on their life. The process demonstrated the importance of positive emotions, mindfulness and character strengths as habits that can be cultivated to support learners cultivate resilience and improve wellbeing.

Findings: The 8-week group model taught the learners the knowledge and applications of scientifically based positive psychology interventions to build resilience and improve wellbeing.

Conclusion & Significance. The model of an 8-week group experience focused on providing the theoretical foundation and application of positive psychology interventions through experiential activities and narrative practices can be a powerful therapeutic model to cultivate resilience and improve wellbeing for women managing many roles in their life.

Biography

Meghan Kirwin, MBA mission is to empower individuals, teams and organizations to thrive. Meghan is passionate about facilitating positive change with the individuals and organizations she works with. Meghan founded The Kirwin Group Inc. (www.kirwingroup.ca) in 2004 and in her role as mentor, coach and facilitator has focused on building thriving workplaces. Meghan developed the Vitality at Work brand (www.vitalityatwork.ca) with a single focus of supporting individuals and organizations to realize their full potential through the application of positive psychology. Meghan has completed a Master's in Business Administration from Wilfrid Laurier specializing in Leadership and Organizational Behaviour. She also completed a Certificate in Applied Positive Psychology (CAPP) from the Wholebeing Institute, where she studied under Dr. Tal Ben Shahar from Harvard University. Meghan is currently working on the completion of a Masters in Science in Applied Positive Psychology from University of East London, England, which is one of the leading Universities in the field of positive psychology.

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Elizabeth K. Misener, PhD, LMSW, is an Assistant Professor in the Masters of Social Work Program at the University of Southern California in their Virtual Academic Centre & Co-founder of Vitality At Work. Her mission at Vitality At Work is to empower individuals, teams and organizations to achieve their full potential through a focused approach grounded in positive psychology (also called the "science of happiness"). Among Elizabeth's areas of specialization are supporting people to reduce stress, encourage personal growth, enhance parenting skills, facilitate decision making, manage time, bolster motivation, clarify objectives, and develop concrete, attainable goals. She has been trained in the technique of Problem Solving Therapy and earned a Meditation and Mindfulness Teacher Training Certificate, both of which are evidence based intervention for people struggling with depression.

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